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ABSTRACT

Intended for both elementary and secondary school teachers who have little or no experience in teaching creative fiction writing, this booklet presents sample lesson plans for writing short stories, fables, myths, mysteries, science fiction, and historical fiction. The lesson plans discuss such elements as plot, setting, characterization, mood, and conflict. Each lesson format is designed around the five elements of subject, purpose, form, speaker, and audience. In addition, the lesson plans are written on the premise that the writing process of prewriting, composing, and revising/editing is used for every assignment. Samples of student writing are included. Appendixes provide an evaluation checklist, a list of the forms of fiction, and a glossary. (HOD)

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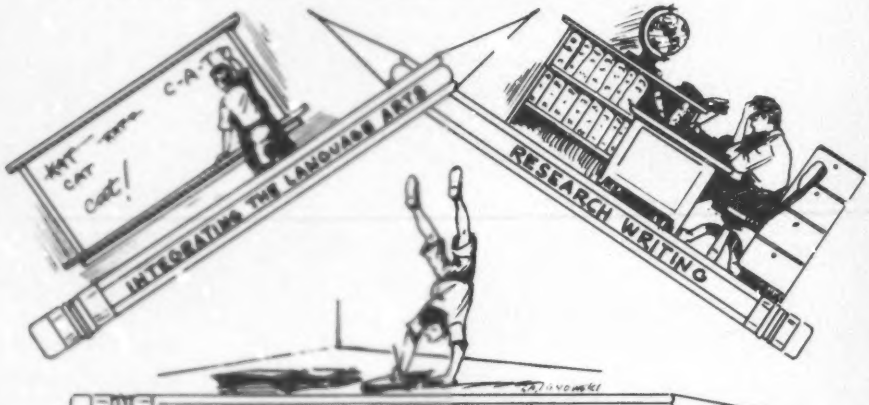
a GUIDE TO

Creative Writing : Fiction



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Wisconsin Writing Project

1982

CS 208 608

A GUIDE TO TEACHING

CREATIVE WRITING: FICTION

Beth Dillie
Jenny Frickelton
Loretta Hoversten
Ann Niedermeier
Deb Schilt
Kathy Strey

Edited By

Linda Christensen
Nancy S. Haugen
John H. Kean

WISCONSIN WRITING PROJECT 1982

University of Wisconsin-Madison
School of Education

WISCONSIN WRITING PROJECT 1982

PROJECT DIRECTOR: John M. Kean, Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
University of Wisconsin-Madison

PROJECT COORDINATORS: Linda Christensen, Nancy S. Haugen
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
University of Wisconsin-Madison

PROJECT SUPPORT STAFF: Donna L. Fisher

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nathan S. Blount, Professor
Chairperson, W.W.P.
UW-Madison

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Oregon School Dist.

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Stoughton Public Schools

Phillip Helgesen, Dist. Adm.
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Wisconsin Improvement Program
UW-Madison

Blair Matthews, Asst. to
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UW-Madison

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Dedication

This guide is dedicated to "those children that are more fascinated by their own marks than they are with the marks of others. They leave their messages on refrigerators, wallpaper, moist windowpanes, sidewalks, and even on paper " (Graves, p.4). Writers "are in love with life, and it is their first love. All its color and movement attract their eager attention" (Tagore, as quoted by Cullur, p. 3).

Introduction

Subject: Creative writing should encourage original thought and imagination. For the purposes of this guidebook, fiction is defined broadly as non-factual prose.

Purpose: We hope this guidebook serves as a stimulus and as a beginning sourcebook for incorporating creative writing into the classroom.

Form: This guidebook summarizes the best ideas and resources we found.

Speakers: We're teachers who are learning to do a better job of teaching creative writing.

Audience: This book is for teachers at all grades and from all subject areas who have an awakening interest in teaching creative writing.

Philosophy

> "Creative writing is an art, the art of thinking and feeling and appreciating the magic words and ideas. Like the teaching of an art, the primary goal of teacher is to nurture, challenge, and encourage development of the talent of each individual. It is through creative writing that children reveal and find their inner selves, their talents, ideas, hopes and goals " (Spencer, p. vii).

We believe that students in grades K-12, can be fine writers of fiction. They come to school with many experiences in language; and, therefore, it's possible to guide these language experiences into a fictional form.

Although students in the middle and higher grades are capable of imaginative writing, they need experiences in characterization, voice agreement and the opportunity to write more. Two ways we hope to provide and enhance these experiences are through developing good writing assignments and through the reading of good models.

Students need to express themselves freely in their assignments, and in our evaluation of their creative writing, we must establish an open atmosphere so students feel secure in their opinions. In general our purpose as teachers is to help students:

-unleash the forces of expression.

-awaken sensitivities to selves and others.

-stir responses to ideas and events.

-prod awareness of feelings and sensations.

-offer forms and tools for combining words (Frank, p. 22).

Overview

> "An imaginative teacher finds or arranges innumerable opportune moments for children's writing. A practical teacher maintains variety in the types of writing normally required from children. The teacher who is both imaginative and practical interweaves varied types of writing with variety in life experiences " (English Curriculum Study Center).

This guide is recommended for teachers, K-12, who have little or no experience teaching creative fiction writing. We have designed sample lesson plans for writing short stories, fables, myths, mysteries, science fiction and historical fiction. Other types of fiction not covered in lesson plan form are found in Appendix 3. Plot, setting, characterization, mood and conflict are tools used by the fiction writer that we included in our lesson plans. Other elements the fiction writer uses are defined in the glossary on page We have obtained samples of student writing for parts of this guide. A teacher may use the samples as a reference point for their own students' writing.

The lesson plans in this guide are written on the premise that the writing process of pre-writing, composing and revising/editing is used for every assignment. For a detailed description of the process, we refer you to the Wisconsin Writing Project Guide entitled, A Guide to Teaching the Writing Process from Pre-writing to Editing (Smelstor, 1978).

Five elements we considered when designing our lesson format were: subject, purpose, form, speaker and audience. By carefully considering these elements when creating assignments, a teacher provides students with a firm structure from which to write. "Properly presented and

properly balanced, skill knowledge gives creative ideas the necessary framework for their most effective display" (Jackson, 1979).

Five elements to consider when designing fiction assignments:

Subject — The topic about which one writes (i.e. space invaders, animals).

Purpose — To entertain, persuade or inform.

Form — Short story, log, diary, mystery, etc.

Speaker — Viewpoint from which the story is being told (i.e. character, narrator).

Audience — Reader

a. the writer himself or herself

b. a known audience, present

c. a known audience, not present

d. an audience not present about which most information is not known but may be assumed.

Changing audience and subject in the lesson plans we share can give you a myriad of other fiction writing assignments. A Guide to Teaching the Importance of Audience and Subject would also help you in this endeavor (Smelstor, 1978).

Activities

SHORT STORY

Short Story (Kindergarten Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
short story (wish story)	student chooses	to entertain	student	wider known

Pre-writing:

1. Ask students how many of them have ever wished they were someone else. Have students share occurrences.

2. Read aloud, Sylvester and the Magic Pebble, by William Steig.

3. Prepare two charts: People and Things on one chart and Beginning, Middle, End on the other chart.

4. Ask who wanted to be something else in this story? (Sylvester.) Write it on the first chart. What happened to Sylvester at the beginning of the story? (Show pages 1-8.) Put answers on second chart under Beginning. What happened in the middle of the story? (Show pages 9-22.) Chart answers under Middle. What happens at the end of the story? (Show pages 23-29.) Chart answers under Endings.

Explain that all stories have a beginning, middle and end like this one.

5. Chart types of people or things the children may wish to be on Chart 1. Select one of the people mentioned to show a Beginning, Middle, and End on chart 2.

6. What would I do if I were a principal at the beginning of my day? (Chart.) Middle? (Chart.) End? (Chart.)

7. Follow through with a few more people or things.

8. Have students dictate their stories to you and chart or write individual stories to be made into book form.

Short Story (Eighth Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
short story	sequel to Light in the Forest	to entertain	omniscient narrator	7th, 8th, 9th grade students

Pre-writing:

The following steps occur after the reading of Conrad Richter's Light in the Forest.

1. Two students, who have been assigned in advance, will role-play the parting of True Son and his Indian Father.

2. Give the following assignment: "Write a short story sequel to Light In the Forest. Tell your story, which will be read by a team of junior high students, as if you are an omniscient narrator."

   a. You must decide whether to present your characters directly or indirectly.

   b. You must decide if the setting for your sequel is in the forest, a city, or a small town. Keep in mind that setting details must be accurate, and you may have to do some research for information.

      Will the setting be True Son's antagonist or will there be other characters? Will your setting reflect True Son's feelings? (Pathetic fallacy.)

   c. Remember! There must be a conflict.

   d. Try to keep the "flavor" of your story like the original.

3. To illustrate point d., have students list 10 metaphors and similes from the novel which use animals to make comparisons. Also, have them list 10 Indian names or words from the novel.

4. Have students pair up to brainstorm ideas for their plots and settings.

After brainstorming, students write individual stories which will be peer edited and put into final form. These stories will be read by a team of junior high students who will select the best 2 (4, 6, 8, 10, whatever you choose) to be bound and added to a permanent collection.

Short Story (Eleventh Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
short story	senior's 1st day at a new high school	to entertain	3rd person	peers small group

Pre-writing:

1. As a class, create 3 characters. Brainstorm together about their dress, speech, environment, hobbies, morals, actions and thoughts. Put these on the board so students can refer back to them as they are writing.

2. From the 3 characters, choose a protagonist and an antagonist. Also, select dynamic and static characters.

3. For establishing conflict and types of conflict, brainstorm incidents that could occur on this kind of day. Again, leave these on the board for reference.

4. Define plot and theme for students. Then permit students to develop these independently.

5. Read aloud the opening paragraphs of Old Times on the Mississippi by Mark Twain which provides a good illustration of mood and the importance of setting.

Upon completion of the rough drafts of their stories, students would peer edit. Explain the need for consistent point-of-view, and how to use effective dialogue. Have students check for these things along with spelling and mechanical errors.

The following day students read their stories aloud in small groups, listening for flow and development of plot. Point out how these two variables influence the stories.

Variations

The following activities can prepare students for writing short stories. Use the exercises to familiarize students with the elements of plot, characterization, mood, theme, point-of-view, voice and to practice putting them together for their short stories.

Developing awareness of plot

Pre-writing:

Find a stimulating introductory paragraph from a magazine short story. Brainstorm with class the possible plot lines, discussing verisimilitude and "cheap" tricks (i.e. a surprise suicide in the last paragraph). Students complete a story line as homework and then try it out for believability on a partner the next day in class. This activity would best follow some classwork on analysis of successful plots from literature (Wood, 1975).

Developing awareness of plot

Pre-writing:

Peruse the want ads personal section to find intriguing ideas for plot development. Students select an ad that piques their imagination

and develop a plot outline. This exercise works well with character development, also (Brinkman, 1975).

Developing awareness of mood

Pre-writing:

Divide students into groups of 5 or 6. Assign a "mood" to each group or have students determine a group "mood" using adjectives like "defeated," "joyous," "sinister," etc. After discussion, each group writes a paragraph to describe a picture, object or place according to their group mood. Read the paragraphs aloud to the class and discuss method, objectivity, and abstraction. Individuals could do similar activities as homework, writing two similar paragraphs with different moods (Lund, 1975).

Fairy Tale (Eleventh Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
fairy tale (fantasy)	student chooses	to entertain	3rd person of the time and culture	peers or younger children

Pre-writing:

Find different versions of the same fairy tale; interesting contrasts are available if similar tales from different cultural backgrounds are used (i.e. The Gingerbread Boy has a Norwegian version with a pancake, a Russian version with a bun, a Japanese version with a rice cake [Stewig, p. 174]). Discuss common features (theme, character development, etc.) and examine differences which reflect the different cultures. Students can write their own fairytale using the same characters but varying the culture, plot or theme. Students might choose to identify an audience of

younger students and give dramatic readings of their fairy tales for this audience.

Variation

Examination of a fairy tale plot line will make a good introduction to plot in the short story. Plot development can be easily identified in a fairy tale. The graph below can be used to visually aid students in this activity.

FABLE

Fable (Third Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
fable (animal story with a moral)	student chooses	to entertain	student	students visiting I. M. C.

Pre-writing:

1. List and discuss fables students have read. Point out common characteristics of fables (i.e. moral, characters are animals).

2. Read aloud selections from Aesops' Fables and/or Leonardo Da Vinci Fables. Discuss the morals in the stories.

3. Make two lists.

a. Animals in the stories

b. Human characteristics and/or problems

4. Using fables to demonstrate, discuss these characteristics. A fable:

a. Is a short story.

b. Involves animals that talk.

c. Presents a conflict between two characters.

d. Provides for the conflict in some way.

e. Teaches a lesson or moral.

f. Specifically states the moral.

5. Ask students to write their own fable, using the charts for ideas.

6. Collect fables. Laminate and put them in book form for the class library.

Variations

K-12

Recommend children prior to third grade have experience reading and/or listening to fables.

6-8

Students may enjoy writing fables with clever, amusing, or silly "morals ". For instance, a story which might normally conclude, "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth" may instead appropriately warn, "Don't let a gift horse look in your mouth." These silly fables might be called "foibles " (Kid Stuff, Forte, Frank and MacKenzie, p. 296).

The Bully Porpoise

In an aquarium, a porpoise was bullying all the dolphins. Especially the bebies. One day one of the aquarium keepers saw the porpoise bullying the dolphins. He lowered the water level to two feet. The dolphins could

swim easily in two feet, but since porpoises are so big, he could not swim in two feet of water. He gave out loud squeals.

The dolphins gathered around the porpoise squealing back as if they were saying, "Don't worry. We're here." The aquarium keepers put back the water to the correct level and the porpoise never bothered the dolphins again.

It is hard to see a friend in someone, until that someone is kind to you.

Jennifer Stillman, 4th grade

MYTHOLOGY

Mythology (8th Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
myth (explanation of how something came into existance)	Student chooses	to entertain	one of the gods/goddesses	peers

Pre-writing:

1. After a study of mythology, pairs of students brainstorm subjects and speakers for myths.
2. Each student chooses a topic and a speaker.
3. Students write rough copies.
4. Share rough copies with a partner.
   a. Determine if the story has an introduction, body, and conclusion.
   b. Check sentence structure.
   c. Check mechanics.
   d. Check spelling.
5. Write final copy.
6. Proofread final copies in partners.

7. Assign students to groups of 3 or 4, and return myths.

8. Myths are read aloud by their authors.

9. Each group selects one to develop into a filmstrip with narration.

10. Groups work out details of filmstrip and narration and present myths to class.

Variation

Using the same steps as in 1-4, have students write and illustrate their own myths. Partners can proofread final copies, which are bound for library or classroom use.

In a mass media class, a puppet show or video tape of one of the myths could be produced for a live audience of young children.

See the section on "Fables" which is better suited for lower elementary students.

MYSTERY STORY

Mystery Story (Fourth Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
short story (mystery)	student chooses	to entertain	child as a detective	display in the IMC with a selection of mystery books

1. Read some adventures from Encyclopedia Brown to the class to stimulate their thinking about mystery stories.

2. Discuss the use of clues throughout the story to develop suspense.

3. Fill an old briefcase with titles printed on "cases" for mystery stories.

Examples: "The Case of the Missing Chalk"

"The Case of the Stolen Jacket"

"The Case of the Upsidedown Day"

4. Have students choose a case, think, and write. Illustrations could accompany their cases.

5. Once they've composed, shared, edited, revised, and rewritten, display the cases in the IMC along with a display of mystery books available.

Variations

K-3

1. Read "Hansel and Gretal" to the students, and discuss clues. Students dictate to an adult or older student their mystery story.

2. Use a treasure hunt for children to learn to follow clues.

7-12

1. Read escapades from Pick Your Own Adventure books. Small groups work together to write their own adventures and alternative adventures.

2. Read an Agatha Christie book and graph clues to the solution. If setting or characterization is the topic of discussion, segments from a book may be more appropriate.

The Case of the Missing Billfold

One day Candy walked unexpectedly into Jane's house. "Hi Candy, any mysteries?" asked Jane jokingly!

"Yes, I came for your help," said Candy. When Jane saw Candy's face she asked, "You're serious aren't you?"

"Absolutely," said Candy.

"Well, explain what happened," said Jane.

"I was at school practicing for the fitness test from 2:00 to 3:00 while at home my house was empty and someone must have come through my window and taken my billfold," said Candy.

"Why do you say through your window?" said Jane.

"Because there are footprints outside my window," said Candy.

"Well," said Jane, "let's go take a look." When they got there they

looked carefully at the footprints. They led from the neighbor's house to Candy's.

"Looks like it could be Chuck Martinson," said Jane.

"What do we do now?" asked Candy.

"Go question him," answered Jane.

"OK," said Candy with enthusiasm. "Let's go!"

"Wait one minute, is there supposed to be a ladder over there?" asked Jane.

"I don't think so!" said Candy.

"I know, let's tell him we found his finger-prints on the ladder," said Jane.

"OK," said Candy. When they arrived they questioned Chuck and said, "You left finger-prints on our ladder when you broke in my room."

"Did not, I was playing cards at 2:30," answered Chuck.

"I guess he's not guilty," said Candy.

"Oh, not so fast," said Jane. "He's guilty all right!"

answer...

Jane and Candy never told Chuck the time the billfold was taken. He told them. (That was his mistake.)

Kila Fry

SCIENCE FICTION

Science Fiction (5th Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
short story (science fiction)	student chooses	to entertain	student	elementary students (Displayed in IMC)

Pre-Writing Activities:

1. In preparation for this activity have students read the story, "Yeddo Ski Credo," from the Macmillan "R" reading series, Level 30, Explorations. Any similar science fiction story may be used.

2. Have students draw a picture of what the alien from outer space looks like. (Draw some conclusions from the story such as the fact that it had more than 10 fingers and was covered with hair.)

3. Write the stories, revise, edit, and rewrite.

Teaching Plot:

1. Prepare a chart on the blackboard reviewing beginning, middle and the end of the story as presented in the K-3 portion of this Guide.

2. Using books or stories the children have read, discuss the beginning, middle and end of the story and record findings on the chart.

3. Introduce the word Plot. Ask questions such as "What makes the plot interesting?" Refer to the problem in the story. Teach the word conflict, an important element of the short story.

Science Fiction:

There are certain elements that make science fiction different from other types of fiction because of the element of the unknown, the strange, the mechanical. Setting and characters are imagined. They may not resemble anything we have on earth. Since some of these elements may be difficult for the children to come up with, make charts and brainstorm about the following:

Descriptions and unusual functions of mechanical things

Problems you might have on a trip to outer space

Physical characteristics of other-worldly creatures.

Set up charts which review baginning, middle, and end, and the charts with ideas about science fiction for children to refer to during the entire process.

The following story was written by Kathy Buchli, a fifth grader, from Deerfield, Wisconsin.

The New Planet
(A Play)

Actors:

Narrator	Captain
Commander	Yucko
Astronaut	Yuckie

Scene 1. Earth at command base.

Narrator: At the command base in the United States, the astronaut is preparing to lift off into Outer Space.

Commander: "You are getting ready to lift off, do you know your mission?"

Astronaut: "My mission. . . A five-year mission, to seek out new worlds and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before."

Commander: "Wrong move, your mission is to go to the new planet that we have located out in space. To win glory for you and your country. You are a tribute to our country for volunteering."

Astronaut: "Volunteered? I was ordered to go to the planet!"

Commander: "Shut up and get in the jeep. I'll drive you over to the rocket."

Scene 2. At the rocket.

Captain: "Ahh, good to see you didn't run away last night so you wouldn't have to go up in the rocket."

Astronaut: "It was in my mind."

Captain: "Well, why didn't you?"

Astronaut: "Sir, you strapped me in bed so I couldn't."

Captain: "Oh yes, well, let's let by-gones be by-gones."

Astronaut: "Sir, I know I will be gone, but don't rub it in."

Captain: "I didn't rub it in."

Astronaut: "Did too."

Captain: "Did not."

Astronaut: "Did too."

Captain: "Did not, and remember, I out-rank you."

Astronaut: "So what! I'm going to risk my life in outer space, and I might not be seen again."

Captain: "Are you looking forward to it?"

Astronaut: "No!!"

Narrator: While they were calmly talking, the commander was loading things onto the rocket.

Commander: "All ready, sir."

Captain: "Well, it looks like this is it."

Astronaut: "It sure is."

Commander: "Just get in the rocket."

(The astronaut climbs nervously up the ladder that leads to the cockpit of the rocket.)

Commander: "Are you in?"

Astronaut: "I sure am, and I don't want to be."

Captain: "Are you safe, are you sound, are you well?"

Astronaut: "Just checking, and don't get huffy."

Commander: "O. K. Time for countdown. 43, 32, 54, hut, hut, hike!"

Captain: "Be serious! This is a world matter!"

Commander: "Ahh, the world serious. I watch it every year on my color T. V. set."

Captain: "Are you all right up there?"

Astronaut: "I think I'm about ready to faint."

Captain: "Well don't faint on the field, because we couldn't get you out. The rocket door has a timelock on it, to make sure you won't be able to get out. So we wouldn't be able to get you out."

Astronaut: "What does that have to do with me fainting on the field or not?"

Captain: "I don't know. It was in the script."

Commander: "Countdown: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1—They're off!"

Captain: "This isn't a horse race. I'll countdown. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Blast off!"

Commander: (Clapping) "Very well said."

Astronaut: "Oh my, I'm going off into space."

Captain: "Well, what's done is done. The rocket is going off course. Well, so much for the astronaut."

Commander: "Well, I'll just call him back."

Captain: "You can't do that."

Commander: "Why?"

Captain: "Because I said."

Commander: "O. K., good enough for me."

They both walk out of space station.

Scene 3 At the planet Sunacren.

Yucko: "Now come on, don't tell me that you just saw a flying saucer."

Yuckie: "O. K. I won't."

Yucko: "Good, now you didn't see a flying saucer then."

Yuckie: "But I did see a flying saucer."

Yucko: "Oh No! It'll ruin my hair-do."

Yuckie: "Well, I'm sorry."

Yucko: "Don't be snotty."

Yuckie: "Hey, look in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, it's superman."

Yucko: "No, you dip, it's a flying saucer."

Yuckie: 'A flying saucer! Run!!"

(They both run into each other and land on the ground.)

Yucko: "Get up and run for cover."

Yuckie: "It's coming down."

Yucko: "Covabunga!"

(The rocket comes down and the astronaut climbs out.)

Astronaut: "Wow, what a ride!"

Yuckie: "Come on Yucko, and smell it and see if it is friendly or not."

Yucko: "O. K. I'm with you."

Astronaut: "Yuckie, those things look terrible."

Yuckie: "That's my name, don't wear it out."

Astronaut: "Huhh."

Yuckie: "My name is Yuckie (and pointing to Yucko) this is Yucko."

Astronaut: "I can see why."

Yucko: "We are the only forms of life on this planet."

Yuckie: "And don't you think we're pretty?"

Astronaut: "I hardly know what to say."

Yucko: "You don't have to say anything, we know that you are scared of us."

Yuckie: "I see that you are in trouble, do you want us to help you get back to your planet?"

Astronaut: "Oh, could you?"

Yucko: "Sure, we will get you back to your planet in half a gleem."

Astronaut: "What is a gleem?"

Yucko: "In your time period. . .an hour."

Astronaut: "Well, let's get to work."

Yuckie: "We don't have to work. All I have to do is point the ray gun at the rocket and it will be brand new."

Astronaut: "O. K. Do it."

(Yuckie points the gun at the rocket and automatically it is fixed.)

Yucko: "O. K. Now climb in and take off."

Astronaut: "Earth, here I come."

(Astronaut takes off into Outer Space.)

Yuckie: "Well, at least I don't have to spend any more time with that ugly thing."

Yucko: "Yea, wasn't he ugly?"

The End.

Variations

K-3

Have the children bring in samples of their mechanical space toys. Write a group story or individual stories using the toys as stimuli.

7-9

After reading any science fiction from the students' text, create a planet and its place in the galaxy. Populate the planet with beings, animals, and plants. Students may prepare filmstrips and narration.

10-12

Use War of the Worlds, a recording by Orson Welles, as a listening experience. Working in small groups, have students write their own script for a radio program using sound effects.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Historical Fiction (Eleventh Grade Example)

Form	Subject	Purpose	Speaker	Audience
historical fiction, slice of life sketch	historical figure	to inform	student	6th grade

Pre-Writing:

(This lesson involves a cooperative arrangement between an eleventh grade class and a sixth grade class in order to provide a real audience.)

Teacher organizes several topic areas, such as American Indians, Civil War heroes, WW I or II heroes, American Presidents, film giants. Send topics to sixth grade teachers. Each sixth grade student selects a topic and then a person represented within that category. The eleventh graders also select topic areas. The teachers then pair the eleventh grade students with sixth graders having similar interests.

1. The eleventh graders gather information about the time periods and the historical characters.

2. Once all of the information is compiled, students write slice of life sketches about the individuals. These slice of life sketches should focus in on one incident in the individual's life in descriptive detail. Humorous findings, memorable incidents, or bits of trivia could provide a focus for the biographical writing. The eleventh graders would have to write in a way that is appropriate for their sixth grade readers.

3. Send finished drafts to the sixth graders for their use. In return, the younger students write the eleventh graders giving them feedback about their writing.

Variations

K-3

Have the students interview elderly citizens about topics such as their school days. The students write these interviews in newspaper format.

4-6

For social studies, have the children put themselves in the role of people living during a particular historical period. The historical

figures can serve as speakers for writing assignments, describing events from their points of view.

7-9

1. Contact the Chamber of Commerce for photographs of the community at the turn of the century. Have students write a descriptive paragraph that could be the opening of a short story.

2. Invite immigrants to talk to your class about their homelands' customs. Develop slice of life writings from the information.

3. Using small groups, search for simulated documents from the lives of early Americans. Students will discover that some documents do not agree, that some information is largely useless, and that they must consult other sources if they wish to fit pieces together. Each group may write a biography about an individual imagined to have lived during the time period.

COMICS OR CARTOONS

Comics or Cartoons (All grades)

Here is an important form of creative writing: fiction. The Guide to Using Popular Culture to Teach Composition, Wisconsin Writing Project, 1979, has an excellent section on the use of comics in the writing process (Smelstor, 1979).

Evaluation

Evaluating creative writing is difficult, but necessary for the growth of the writer. Evaluation may or may not include grading and correcting errors, depending on the type of creative writing and the teaching situation. For example, high school teachers of creative writing classes usually assign letter grades to their students work; elementary teachers tend to have more freedom in methods of grading.

Evaluating creative writing has two important aspects: 1) providing positive feedback for the student's efforts; 2) offering specific suggestions for improving the work. Creative writing requires that students take risks. It is the teacher's responsibility to build students' self-confidence while guiding them on to better writing.

Most teachers agree that marking student papers with quantities of red ink does not promote better writing; students feel defeated when they see multitudes of corrections on their papers; besides, they need concrete suggestions for improving the content of their papers rather than just notice of all the mechanical errors. Yet, students know when praise is undeserved and undifferentiated. The role of the teacher as evaluator is a demanding one. Learning to be a good evaluator provides teachers with opportunities for professional growth.

A wide range of practical suggestions for evaluation of student papers is explained in three other Wisconsin Writing Project Guidebooks. See A Guide to Evaluation of Students' Writing (Smalstor, 1978), A Guide to Providing Individualized Writing Experiences-Writing Labs/

Writing Centers (Diamond, 1980), and A Guide to Peer and Self-Editing (Christensen, 1982) for workable methods of evaluation. Those guidebooks offer suggestions for both inexperienced and veteran teachers of writing.

Teachers can clarify objectives for student writing, thereby easing their evaluation tasks, by providing good writing assignments to their students. Help students identify their subject, purpose, form, audience, and speaker. Tell students how their papers will be evaluated. Often, attempting the writing assignment oneself provides the best means for evaluation and sets a realistic standard against which to measure student work. Sometimes, identifying a very real and specific audience enables students to do their best work. Knowing that their peers will read the finished copy may supply motivation for careful writing and revising.

By evaluating students' work during the whole writing process (pre-writing, writing, revising), teachers can judge the progress of individual students. A writing folder with samples and notes allows teachers to reflect on the improvement in students' work. Students should be involved in the evaluation process, too. They can learn to judge their own work and provide valuable insight for their peers. Teach students to self-evaluate, and praise them for applying editing techniques.

Appendices

Appendix A

Evaluation Checklist

Children's writing can be improved by evaluating it on the basis of clarity, style, unity and mechanics. The following checklists may be put on charts for children to refer to as they write.

Is Your Writing Clear? (Clarity)

1. Did you leave out any words that were meant to be in the writing?
2. Watch your pronouns. Does your reader know which nouns they go with?
3. Punctuation is important!
4. Let's bury words like nice, good, beautiful, go, walk, and say.
5. Have a friend or someone in your family read what you have written. Do they understand your writing?

Does Your Writing Fit Together? (Unity)

1. Place. Can your reader discern the nature of the setting? Is it a peaceful place? An exciting place? A messy place?
2. Person. Can your reader recognize the essence of the main characters in your story? Is the person friendly? Mysterious? Argumentative? Selfish? Happy-go-lucky? Eccentric? Unpredictable?
3. Main Idea. Can your reader tell the main idea of your story? Does everything you have written help the reader to get the message or feeling from the story?

How Did You Write? (Style)

1. Did you use more than one kind of sentence--Question, Statement, Exclamation?
2. Are all of your words unnecessary?
3. Are some words selected carefully for variation?

4. Did you use figurative language, such as: metaphor, simile, idiom?

<u>What Will Help People Read Your Writing</u>? (Mechanics)

1. Capital letters:

   a. Did you capitalize the first word in each sentence?

   b. Did you capitalize the word <u>I</u>?

   c. Did you capitalize proper names?

   d. Did you capitalize the first word, the last word, and all other important words when you wrote titles?

2. End Punctuation

   a. Did you put a period, question mark, or exclamation point at the end of each sentence?

3. Commas

   a. Did you use a comma to separate words in a series?

   b. Did you use commas to set off words of address and interrupters?

   c. Did you use a comma before or after quotations?

   d. Did you use a comma to separate cities from states and months and days from years? (Murray n.d.)

Appendix B

Forms of Fiction

As you delve into the exciting world of fiction, you will discover that fiction can take many forms. We have chosen to list some of them. This is not an exhaustive list. You, as a teacher, will have the imagination and expertise to add to it.

Animal Story
Cartoons
Character Sketch
Dialogue
Fables
Fairy Tale
Fantasy
Fictionalized Autobiography
Fictionalized Biography
Fictitious Travelogues
Folk Tale
Horror Story
Invitation
Journals
Legends
Letters
Logs of the Past
Monologue
Mystery
Myth
Narration
Newspaper Column
Novel
Parables
Personal Essay
Romance
Sales Talk
Science Fiction
Short Story
Slice of Life
Slogan
Social Commentary
Tall Tales
Telegram
Tragedy
Western Story
Wordless Books

Appendix C

Glossary

Allegory: a literary work in which characters and actions represent abstractions
Alliteration: repetition of initial consonant sound
Allusion: indirect reference to something or someone outside the literary work
Antagonist: force in conflict with protagonist; usually designated as self, another person, society, nature
Anthropomorphism: the giving of human qualities to nonhuman animals or objects
Assonance: repetition of vowel sound in phrase

Backdrop setting: generalized or relatively unimportant setting

Cadence: rhythmic flow in prose
Character: human being, real or personified animal, personified object taking a role in literature
Character development: filling out a variety of character traits to provide the complexity of a human being
Characterization: Direct—author tells you what kind of person the character is.
Indirect—the reader must decide what kind of person the character is.
Flat characters—do not change during the story.
Round characters—change during the story.
Chronology: order dictated by passing of time
Classic: literary work that lives to be read and reread
Cliche': overused term which has lost meaning
Cliffhanger: unresolved suspense that concludes a chapter
Climax: action that precipitates resolution of conflict
Closed ending: conclusion leaving no plot questions unanswered
Coincidence: chance concurrence of events
Complication: early action; part of rising action
Conflict: struggle between protagonist and opposing force
Connotation: associative or emotional meaning of a word
Consonance: repetition of consonant sound in phrase

Denotation: explicit or dictionary meaning
Denouement: final or closing action following climax
Diction: choice of words or wording
Didacticism: in literature, an instructive or moralistic lesson often at the expense of entertainment
Dramatic or objective point of view: third-person narration in which actions and speeches are recorded without interpretation
Dynamic character: one who changes in the course of the story
Echo: words repeated in familiar pattern
Epic: long narrative poem about a heroic figure whose actions reveal the values of the culture

Episodic plot: plot with independent, short story-like chapters linked by characters or theme more than by action
Explicit theme: theme stated clearly in the story
Exposition: presentation of essential information needed for understanding of the action

Fable: very brief story, usually with animal characters, that states a didactic theme or moral
Falling action: final or closing action following climax; denouement
Fantasy: story about a non-existent or unreal world in which action may depend upon magic or the supernatural
Figurative language: devices making comparisons, saying one thing in terms of another
First-person point of view: "I" in narration in which a person's experiences, thoughts, and feelings are told by himself/herself
Flashback: return to event that occurred before present scene; retrospect
Flat character: one that is little developed
Foil: a character whose contrasting traits point up those of a central character
Folk ballad: narrative poem passed down by word of mouth; often about a hero
Folk rhyme: rhymes passed down by word of mouth
Folk tale: story passed down by word of mouth
Foreshadowing: hints of what is to come

Hyperbole: exaggeration or overstatement

Imagery: verbal appeals to the senses
Implicit theme: theme implied from the story's context
Inevitability: sense that it had to happen; in literature a sense that the outcome was necessary and inescapable
Integral setting: essential and specific setting which influences character, plot, and theme

Legend: a traditional narrative of a people, often with some basis in historical truth
Limerick: five-line humorous verse with tradional rhythm and rhyme pattern
Limited omniscient point of view: third-person narration in which story is seen through the mind(s) of one or few characters
Lyric poem: song-like poem, compact expression of feeling

Metaphor: implied comparison
Meter: somewhat regular rhythm pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry
Motif: recurring element in literary work, often found in traditional literature
Myth: story originating in folk beliefs and showing supernatural forces operating

Narrative order: sequence in which events are recounted
Narrative poem: poem that tells a story

Objective or dramatic point of view: third-person narration in which actions and speeches are recorded without interpretation
Omniscient point of view: an all-knowing writer tells the story in third person
Onomatopoeia: words that sound like their meanings, such as meow, moo
Open ending: final outcome of conflict unknown

Parody: imitation of known form for comic effect
Personification: giving human traits to nonhuman beings or objects
Plot: sequence of events involving character in conflict
Poetry: distilled and imaginative expression of feeling
Point of view: the mind(s) through which the reader sees the story
Primary theme: major underlying and unifying truth of a story
Progressive plot: plot with central climax
Protagonist: central character in the conflict

Realism: story based upon the possible, though not necessarily probable
Resolution: falling action following climax
Rhyme: repetition of identical or similar stressed sound or sounds
Rhythm: recurring flow of strong and weak beats
Rising action: exposition and complications that lead to the climax
Round character: a fully developed or three-dimensional character

Science fiction: story that relies upon invention or extension of nature's laws, not upon the supernatural or magical
Secondary theme: less important or minor theme of a story
Sensationalism: focus upon the thrilling or startling
Sentiment: emotion or feeling
Sentimentality: overuse of sentiment, false arousal of feelings
Setting: the time and place in which the action occurs
Simile: stated comparison, usually using like or as
Static character: one who does not change in the course of the story
Stereotype: character possessing expected traits of a group rather than being an individual
Stock character: flat character with very little development found in numerous stories
Style: mode of expression
Suspense: state of uncertainty that keeps reader reading
Symbol: person, object, situation, or action operating on two levels of meaning--literal and figurative or suggestive

Theme: statement giving the underlying truth about people, society, or the human condition, either explicitly or implicitly
Tone: writer's attitude toward his or her subject and readers
Touchstone: example of excellence referred to for comparison

Understatement: reverse exaggeration or playing down

Verse: here used to denote rhyming metrical structure with less emotional intensity than poetry

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Wisconsin Writing Project Participants

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Charlene Beckner
Deerfield Schools

Joan Cantwell
Oconomowoc Senior High School

Janet Danielson
Eastside School, Sun Prairie

Candice Dexheimer
Monroe Public Schools

Beth Dillie
Markesan Middle School

Jennifer Frickleton
Deerfield Elementary School

James Hein
Juda High School

Don Hinz
Rockwell Elementary School, Fort Atkinson

Loretta Hoversten
Deerfield Elementary School

Bruce Johnson
Oregon Jr. High School

Lori Jordan
Juda School

Elsa Lawrence
Middleton High School

Carol J. Levenson
UW-Madison

Alice Lewerenz
Oconomowoc Jr. High

Patricia Muehrer
James F. Luther Jr. High, Fort Atkinson

Mary Pat Muirhead
Jefferson Middle School, Madison

Heidi Mumm, Okauchee Elementary
Oconomowoc School District

Ann Niedermeier
West High School, Madison

Mary Pick
Juda School

Richard Reinke
Sun Prairie Sr. High School

Joe Ringeisen
Verona High School

Elizabeth Rohde
Royal Oaks School, Sun Prairie

Margaret Rufi
Northside School, Monroe

Deborah Schilt
Monroe Public Schools

Bob Schultz
Sabish Jr. High, Fond du Lac

Rochelle Stillman
Northside Elementary, Middleton

Kathryn Strey
Luther Jr. High, Fort Atkinson

Barb Teff
Elm Lawn School, Middleton

Pam Jesian-Tobey
Waunakee High School

David Watry
Arrowhead High School, Hartland

Donna Welbes
Gompers Elementary School, Madison

Mary Ziegelbauer
Arrowhead High School, Hartland

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Individuals desiring information concerning the Wisconsin Writing Project should write to:

Wisconsin Writing Project
556 Teacher Education Building
University of Wisconsin
225 North Mills Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706
(608)263-4660